

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 PM-04 DODE-00

CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01

FAA-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 DHA-02 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06

ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 H-02 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

/106 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W:EWLOLLIS/BKIRKPATRICK/MPH

APPROVED BY AF/W:TWMSMITH

EB/OA/AVP:JKGORDON

PM/SAS:DHESTER

AF/C:MFGALLAGHER

EUR/NE:JSCHUMATE

DOD/DSAA:PSOMMER (INFO)

----- 020126

R 051654Z AUG 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASHA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, EAIR, CASC, PINS, DM, NI

SUBJECT: CESSNA AIRCRAFT AND PILOTS DETAINED IN NIGERIA

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REF: A) LAGOS 8712, B) COTONOU 1223 NOTAL, (C) LOME 1702

1. CESSNA AIRCRAFT CO. CONTACTED DEPARTMENT AUGUST 3 TO EXPRESS CONCERN FOR FATE OF THREE NON-AMERICAN FERRY PILOTS AND THREE CESSNA 150 AIRCRAFT DETAINED SINCE JULY 12 BY NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES. DETAILS GIVEN BY CESSNA SAME AS REPORTED REF A EXCEPT CESSNA UNDERSTANDS ALL THREE AIRCRAFT LANDED LAGOS AND FLEW 120 NAUTICAL MILES FROM THERE BEFORE MAKING PRECAUTIONARY LANDING AT UGHELLI. CESSNA HAS TRIED AND FAILED TO INTEREST ZAIRIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON IN CABLEING KINSHASA OR ZAIRIAN EMBASSY IN LAGOS TO INTERCEDE WITH FMG. COMPANY IS NOW TRYING TO CONTACT HEAD OF ZAIRIAN AIR FORCE IN KINSHASA. THE PLANES ARE FIRST OF FIFTEEN SOLD TO ZAIRIAN AIR FORCE UNDER FOREIGN MILITARY SALES (FMS) PROGRAM OF USG. FOUR MORE ARE READY TO LEAVE EUROPE BUT ARE BEING HELD UP PENDING RESOLUTION OF PROBLEM WITH NIGERIA.

2. FOR LAGOS: PLEASE MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION AND FRENCH AND ZAIRIAN EMBASSIES AND REPORT DEVELOPMENTS AT FREQUENT INTERVALS. IF NECESSARY,

YOU MAY SUPPORT REPRESENTATIONS OF OTHER DIPLOMATS, KEEPING IN MIND THE FACT THAT THE INTERESTS OF A US CORPORATION ARE DIRECTLY INVOLVED. (CESSNA CONFIRMED AUGUST 5 THAT TITLE TO THE AIRCRAFT IS WITH US PARENT COMPANY OF WICHITA, KANSAS, UNTIL PLANES ARRIVE IN ZAIRE.)

3. FOR COTONOU: US PILOTS NOT INVOLVED AND ALLEGED VIOLATION OF BENINESE AIRSPACE NOT CONFIRMED. YOU SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT REPLY TO BENINESE NOTE. IF GPRB RAISES THE ISSUE WITH YOU AGAIN, YOU CAN NOTE THAT THREE PLANES OF US REGISTRY WERE REPORTEDLY FLYING IN THE VICINITY OF BENIN AT THE TIME, THEY WERE NOT PILOTED BY US PILOTS. THEY WERE OWNED BY US FIRM WHICH IS SELLING THEM AND WERE BEING FERRIED BY NON-US FIRM TO COUNTRY OF PURCHASER. YOU CAN REASSURE THEM THAT THE USG DOES NOT DESIRE US AIRCRAFT TO OVERFLY BENIN WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE GPRB.

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HABIB

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Disposition Authority: coburnhl
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